

Glimpses of the Old World

BERLIN, Dec. 24.—"Neither an invasion of England nor, indeed, war is in any way impossible," says a high German staff officer, who has come to Lord Roberts' assistance after nearly all military experts have riddled his speech in the house of lords and declared that he is seeing phantoms in bright daylight.

"The mobilization of an army of 200,000 men for an invasion of England," he writes, "would be accompanied by enormous difficulties, but it is not impossible. The fortunes of war are always uncertain. Heavy surprise blows can be delivered. If our fleet opposes the English at the proportion of one to three, who knows what will be the result if the proportion is reversed with regard to liability and discipline under fire? Who can guarantee the faultless behavior of the new all-big-gun ships at the right, perhaps the most decisive, moment?"

"Invasion is, indeed, within the realm of possibilities and of feasibility viewed from my knowledge of the internal worth of our army and navy. But especially is it possible in the event of England being at the time elsewhere occupied. Once a landing has been carried out, nothing would then seriously hinder us from making a clean sweep in the island and making ourselves quite at home."

"Should the bulk of the English fleet reappear and attempt to compel us to retreat to Germany, we would dictate terms of peace, for England's head, London, would be in our power."

From St. Petersburg comes the report of a scandalous incident which occurred in the presence of an aristocratic company assembled at the opening of an exhibition of old Russian pictures, which is taking place under the patronage of the Grand Duchess Constantine.

Following a dispute over some trivial matter, Baron Wrangel, the organizer of the exhibition, brutally attacked the aged and highly honored academician, M. Botkin. The latter is the possessor of one of the most valuable collections of pictures in Russia, said to be worth \$5,000,000.

It is feared that as a result of the affray M. Botkin will suffer the loss of an eye. M. Botkin's son has challenged the baron to a duel and the czar is said to have banished him from court.

Maintaining that Russia's only safe attitude during the impending struggle over the Balkan question is rigorously to refrain from attacking Austria or Germany, the influential Russian political writer, Mensikoff, has written an article in the Novoe Vremya which, though it has wounded the pride of the Russian people, is nevertheless greatly praised for its fearlessness and common sense. "We do not possess," the writer says, "in an adequate measure a navy nor an entirely trustworthy army, nor that source of strength which is termed patriotism. I should consider myself a traitor to the fatherland if I counseled the government to pursue an aggressive policy."

"Defense is a different matter. Every nation, strong or weak, should be ready to defend itself, and I insist on defense to the very end, to the last breath."

Emperor William and every member of the imperial family must practice most rigid economy from now on and indefinitely. This, although his annual income is estimated conservatively at \$10,000,000.

This galling lack of money may account in part for the present almost melancholic state of a ruler who thinks that wealth is as much his by divine right as is sovereignty.

This fact may explain rightly why the crown princess, mercifully wishing to help those widowed and orphaned by the recent mining disaster at Hamm, had to sell below its cost a diamond tiara worth \$25,000.

Again and again socialist members of the reichstag have deplored the emperor's extravagances as frightful. But he recognizes extravagance only in others.

Recently the king of Greece, who receives a "pittance" of \$260,000 a year, demanded more money from the state. Emperor William, commenting on that very broadly, hinted that if King George could not live on that large amount he had better let the emperor put one of his sons on the throne of Greece, as he could get along very nicely on \$260,000.

The emperor has been literally pouring out money on works of art, in restoring old German castles, in rebuilding Achilleon, the beautiful marble palace in the island of Corfu, which he bought from the empress of Austria's estate. The empress found the castle high up on the hills, not fitted for her cultured taste. Emperor William spent \$1,000,000 in changing and improving the castle and in laying out parks which he himself designed. On his last visit to the castle several servants accompanied him.

FROM LONDON.

LONDON, Dec. 24.—A remark by the headmaster of aristocratic Eton college to the effect that all German schoolboys wear long faces because they detest the prospect of compulsory military service has created quite a storm of indignation in Germany. Interviewed yesterday, Privy Councillor Dr. Bardt, headmaster of the Joachimsthal Royal gymnasium, Berlin, Germany's nearest approach to a public school of the Eton type, declared that the conclusions of the headmaster at Eton were absolutely wrong. "Directly opposite this school," he said, "are the buildings of the artillery inspection department, where soldiers are coming and going and sentries are posted all day and night. I have failed during long years of observation to note that our boys are ever depressed by this ever-present reminder of the military life. Indeed, if it gives them any concern at all it is

altogether an inspiring feeling. They know, it is true, that a term with the colors means rigorous work, the iron discipline and Spartan self-denial just at a time when young manhood hankers for the opportunity to make a good start in life, but German boys realize that barrack training means bodily command. Rev. Lytleton's contention that German boys must pass a tremendously stiff examination or be condemned to spend three years in the army makes us smile. No such examination exists. It used to exist years ago, but the headmaster of Eton could have ascertained that nowadays our public schools voluntarily, without an examination of any kind, give the boys who finish creditably the sixth year in the ordinary gymnasium course a so-called military certificate which entitles them to enter the army as one-year volunteers.

"One thing our system has failed to produce is a race of accomplished public speakers for which we so much envy England."

Another link is about to be added to the Cape to Cairo railroad, which at present has been laid northward as far as Broken Hill, for Robert Williams, the managing director of the Tanganyika concessions, has just announced that he has secured the capital necessary for the extension of the railway from that point to the Congo boundary. The railroad will thus be brought to the southeast Congo, which is reputed to be one of the richest mining districts in the world, abounding in gold, tin and other minerals, especially copper. The British South African company had found it impossible to raise the money for the extension from Broken Hill, as it is proposed, via B'wana M'Kubwa to the Congo at Mabaya, but by this new arrangement the Anglo-Belgian company, the Union Miniere du Haut Katanga, will lay the line from Broken Hill to a point on the Congo boundary near B'wana M'Kubwa. The extension will be about 120 miles long.

A peculiar ceremony took place in the Old Gate House hotel, the other evening, when the son of the owner went through the ancient custom of "swearing on the horns." The oath was administered by the landlord in black gown, mask and wig, accompanied by a clerk who carried the horns. The landlord afterward acquainted his son with the quaint privileges of a freeman of the place.

The hotel, which is the oldest inn in London, and one of the sights of the city, has been licensed for more than 500 years.

Advices just received from Somaliland indicate that the Mad Mullah again shows signs of getting on the warpath. He had not, according to last advices, interfered with the British protectorate but is leading a large force east and is threatening the British frontier. A large number of troops have been sent to eastern borders of the protectorate and it is feared that there will be a collision with the forces of the Mad Mullah and another campaign will be necessary.

The most interesting wedding which has taken place recently is that of the eldest son of the house of Glamis, who last week married a daughter of the Duke of Leeds.

Glamis castle is probably historically the most interesting building north of the Tweed.

Its traditions date back to Druids and Celts and the Stone Age, and the cross in the manse garden at Glamis is one of the earliest Christian symbols to be found on this island; but the pointed turrets of the old Scotch house, with its gray roof and its stone walls, are chiefly celebrated for the grim mystery which it is supposed to conceal.

Whatever that mystery may be, there is little doubt that it seriously affects the owners of the old castle.

I well recollect being told that the late Lord Strathmore was one of the gayest of the youthful peers until the day he came of age, and after that a smile was rarely seen to light his face. He used to spend many hours in his private chapel, praying that the terrible influence which rested on the house might be withdrawn, and he is said to have remarked to a friend, "If you could guess even the nature of this secret, you would go down on your knees and thank God that you, too, were ignorant of it."

It has been the custom of the house of Strathmore to make known this secret to the eldest son on attaining his majority and the factor of the estate. Many have been the guesses and long the discussions as to what is the history of this weird possession, but it has never been revealed.

When Lady Glamis returns from her honeymoon an interesting ceremony will take place as she crosses the threshold of the gateway four hundred years old. The lion beaker of Glamis will be presented to the bride, and in it she will pledge and be pledged.

This beautiful cup is in the form of a lion, and originally contained a quart of wine, but as the modern head would not stand such a draught, an inner cup has been inserted, so that the bride need not sip the wine.

Apart from the central interest of the mystery of Glamis, there are many legends of ghostly visitants, and I recollect on one occasion an aunt of mine staying there, and telling me afterward that she saw a lady in green cross the gardens.

She thought little of it, and at luncheon remarked that the lady did not seem to be of the house party. The host and hostess looked uncomfortable, and she afterward learned that the figure she had seen was the ghost of a former Lady Glamis who was falsely accused of witchcraft against the life of James V., and who was burned at the stake, and she was constantly seen wandering round the site of her old home.

Germany and Holland are whispered in diplomatic circles to be exchanging confidential notes—the former's curt

and resentful, the latter's suave and non-committal—concerning reports that England and the "low countries" are fixing up an alliance.

The story afloat—no doubt the one the kaiser heard—is to the effect that England proposes to guarantee absolutely Holland's independence in return, it is presumed, for a pledge of the use of such Dutch ports as Britain's fleets may sometime happen to need in wartime.

"Considering that Wilhelm has long been casting yearning eyes on those same ports—which would be strategically invaluable to him—any such treaty would be a severe blow to the Fatherland."

The situation isn't made any pleasanter when the fact is taken into account that the harbors would be more useful as bases from which to conduct a campaign against England than any other power.

Maybe Queen Wilhelmina hasn't forgotten that the kaiser threatened, during the Boer war, to seize and fortify the Dutch ports against England if Wilhelmina didn't do it herself. The queen's sympathies were with the Boers, of course, but all the same it couldn't have been pleasant to get an ultimatum of that kind from the German ruler.

The situation hasn't developed far enough for even the most speculative diplomat to do much forecasting, but the issue is nevertheless so vital to the kaiser that no one would be surprised to see him attempt forcible interference if he becomes convinced that the treaty is really going to be closed. The matter might, indeed, serve as a cause for the Anglo-German conflict Europe has so long expected.

FROM ROME.

ROME, Dec. 24.—Pope Pius X.'s economy and good management are rapidly putting the vatican upon its "financial legs." It is already, in fact, better off than in years, despite the fact that Pius's revenues have been no larger than before.

When his holiness ascended the papal throne he laid down some rigid financial rules. There was a good deal of complaint concerning them, but the supreme pontiff wouldn't deviate from his policy an inch.

The first thing he required was the cutting off of every penny of unnecessary expense. Many servants were dismissed and scores of little household extravagances were ruthlessly eliminated.

Next, the pope forbade the risking of any of the church's property or money in any investment partaking in the slightest of the nature of speculation. Finally, he began keeping exact note of all money received from pilgrims, in the form of Peter's pence or private donations. Such funds are turned over to the administrator of accounts, but the expenditure of even the smallest sum out of the routine is permitted from it only with Pius's personal "O. K."

Most of the vatican's ready cash is deposited in a clerical bank in Rome, which pays 6 per cent interest and keeps the fund ready for use at a moment's notice.

The only investments countenanced by his holiness are in British consols or in real estate in Rome, where rents are high and land values safe.

FROM PARIS.

PARIS, Dec. 24.—The first woman ever elected to any public office in France is Madame Clemence Jusselin, who has just been returned a Parisian "Conseiller Prudhomme," or as one should say "Prudfemme." She thus becomes a commercial judge, entitled to decide in trade disputes. The lady is a dressmaker and was put up by the representatives of her profession. Four other women were candidates, but were defeated. Mme. Jusselin has been elected almost entirely by men. The new law which came into force a few weeks ago, both renders women eligible to the "councils of honest men" and extends the franchise to women for elections to those bodies. But the latter privilege was hardly used at all by the thousands of French women employed in trade or managing businesses of their own, and had it not been for the male vote not even one of the female candidates would have passed. Mme. Jusselin looks upon her election as an "almost historic event," for it is something to be proud of to be the first woman in France whose name has come out at the top of a legally recognized ballot. "And now let us to work," added the dressmaker and commercial judge.

A woman in Brussels, who was doubting the constancy of her husband, a prominent woolen merchant, Van Op, has carried out a diabolical act of revenge. When her husband retired to rest, she placed a kettle of water over the fire, waited until it was boiling and then carried it upstairs. Pulling the clothes from her husband, who was fast asleep, she poured the water over him.



A PUBLIC REBUKE.

Facetious Person (setting out on a ten days' visit)—Gaspard, how careless of yer! I told yer t' fetch me runabout an' here yer've brought the limoosin!

scalding him to death. She is now in jail.

The French minister of war, General Picquart, announces his intention of sending five French officers each year to study the organization of the Japanese army in Japan itself. General Picquart has realized that much of the progress of Japan is due to the Japanese assimilation of Western methods and he believes that French soldiers may in turn learn much from the East. He will select every year, therefore, five French officers who know English well, and send them to Japan for two years. He has also started special classes this month for the teaching of Japanese to officers who wish to go.

PARIS, Dec. 24.—Everywhere in Paris one now hears discussions of the bill drawn up by six members of the chamber, in which they propose to discuss the phrase "to obey" in the marriage service in favor of the women.

Although the woman does not speak the vow, she says "yes" when the magistrate puts the customary question to her. The phrase in question is in paragraph 213 of the Code Napoleon, which reads: "The husband is bound to protect his wife and the wife to obey her husband."

The deputies, as well as those who oppose the bill, declare that the second part of the paragraph is a dead letter. It is well known that French wives obey their husbands only when they choose. Why, therefore, need the law be changed? ask the dissenters.

The law as it now stands is favorable enough to the women, the married men say. The first half of paragraph 213 gives them a right which they can claim successfully; the second half places an obligation upon them which they can successfully evade.

In answer to these assertions, the six deputies, with letters from magistrates as proofs, declare that during the ceremony, when the expected phrase is pronounced, brides and bridegrooms invariably look at each other and smile, and sometimes the magistrate has seen them wink at each other, while it has been another's experience to see the pair nudge each other.

FROM THE BALKANS.

BELGRADE, Dec. 24.—King Peter is considering very seriously abdicating in favor of the crown prince. The king's health, never strong, has been badly affected by the critical conditions of the last few weeks. It is reported on what seems to be good authority that the king suffered from an apoplectic stroke which has left his mind impaired, and for this reason he insists that he should abdicate. Influence is being brought upon him to postpone any action until affairs become more settled. The crown prince is hot-headed and committed to the war party, and it is feared that if he ascended to the throne he would take some overt action which would easily bring on a conflict with Austria.

A MISAPPREHENSION.

Judge Hough of the United States circuit court was discussing at a legal dinner in New York, a misapprehended law.

"This law is perhaps obscurely worded, at least from the popular point of view," he said, "and that, perhaps, is why it is so totally misapprehended."

"The misapprehension of this law reminds me of a Southern millionaire. He came East for his wife's sake, and took a Fifth avenue house. There the lady plunged, as madly as society would let her, into the social amusements of the season. On towards the season's end she fell ill, and a physician, after examining her, reported to her husband: 'Well, doc, what's the verdict?' the Southern millionaire inquired anxiously.

"Your wife, sir," the doctor answered, "is suffering, I regret to say, from functional derangement."

"The millionaire's eyes filled with tears. 'Doc,' he said, 'I told her she'd go under if she didn't stop gadding about to all them swell functions. And now, by gee, she's deranged. Is she liable to be violent?'"

THE HAWAIIAN BEAUTY.

Une belle Americaine art thou,
O daughter of a tropic isle;
This land is Paradise enow
When basking in thy dangerous smile.

Thy paler sisters o'er the sea,
Faded from my gaze within thy power,
My eyes are blind to aught but thee,
And life is one short sensuous hour.
—From News Letter, San Francisco.

"So you braced up and asked that man to pay the money he had borrowed?"
"I did," answered the diffident person.
"With what result?"
"In addition to going without the money I was compelled to apologize,"
—Washington Star.



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